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ABSTRACT

Scores were compared for two experimental assessment instruments constructed as examples of the techniques used by the Sentence Verification Technique (SVT) of J. M. Royer and others (1979) and the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) of the Michigan Department of Education (1987, 1988) to measure reading comprehension as an interactive process. Sixty-two university students (6 males and 56 females) were administered both experimental treatments. All participants were undergraduates in their senior year of the Professional Teacher Preparation Program at a major public university in the Southwest. There were 21 high, 21 average, and 20 low achieving readers in the sample. Using analysis of covariance with tests of prior knowledge as covariates, data were analyzed and interpreted at the 0.05 level of significance. There was a highly significant difference between SVT scores and MEAP scores. However, there were no significant differences when SVT scores adjusted for prior knowledge were examined according to the reading ability rank of the students. There were significant differences both before and after MEAP scores adjusted for prior knowledge were examined according to the reading ability rank of students. These findings indicate that the tests measure different aspects of reading comprehension despite a common theoretical framework. A 33-item list of references is included. Appendices present experimental target passages, the tests, and a proposed combined test. (SLD)

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A Comparison of Two Interactive Reading Comprehension Measures

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Running Head: A COMPARISON OF TWO INTERACTIVE READING

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Abstract

This investigation compared the scores of two experimental assessment instruments constructed as examples of the techniques used to measure reading comprehension as an interactive process by the Sentence Verification Technique (SVT) and the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP). Sixty-two senior-level university students were administered both experimental treatments. Using analysis of covariance with tests of prior knowledge as covariates, data were analyzed and interpreted at .05 level of significance. Findings indicated that (a) there was a highly significant difference between SVT scores and MEAP scores; (b) there were no significant differences when SVT scores adjusted for prior knowledge were examined according to reading ability rank of student; and (c) there were significant differences both before and after MEAP scores adjusted for prior knowledge were examined according to reading ability rank of students. As a result of the findings, these tests were viewed as measuring different aspects of reading comprehension despite a common theoretical framework.

During the past fifteen years most comprehension research has come to depend upon a theory of reading that endorses the active role of the reader. Generally speaking, researchers assume that "comprehension is a constructive process in which meaning is a derived from the text and from interactions between the text and the background knowledge of the reader" (Carr, Dewitz, & Patberg, 1983, p.1). This is in contrast to earlier theories which suggest that the act of reading involves a transfer of the meaning residing in the text to the reader, and assigns the reader the passive role of information receiver.

The interactive theory of reading comprehension holds that reading is a dynamic process that involves the ability of the reader to construct meaning through the interaction between information suggested by the written language and the existing knowledge of the reader. This interactive dimension focuses "on how the reader derives meaning from print; what the reader brings to the reading situation in terms of experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities; how the information is presented in written text; and what effects context

has on reading. Therefore, performance objectives and assessment instruments must also focus on the what, why, and how of reading" (Wixson & Peters, 1984). The purpose of this study, then, was to locate two assessment techniques, which have been shown to assess reading comprehension as an interactive process, to develop experimental tests using these two techniques, and to compare the results of these tests.

In recent studies, two such techniques for measuring reading comprehension as an interactive process are described. First, Royer, Hastings, and Hook (1979) introduced the Sentence Verification Technique (SVT). The SVT is developed by writing three additional sentences for each sentence in an original passage. These sentences include an original (an exact facsimile of the sentence as it appears in the original passage), a paraphrase (a sentence in which as many words as possible are changed without altering the meaning), a meaning change (a sentence in which one or two words are altered to change the meaning) , and finally, a distractor (a sentence in which the syntactic structure and the theme are consistent with those of the passage,

but are unrelated to any other sentence in the passage.) Then after reading the passage, the student is asked to judge whether each of the sentences is "old" information (originals and paraphrases) or "new" information (meaning changes and distractors).

The use of the SVT as a measure of reading comprehension is based on the theoretical assumption that when text is read and understood, it is represented in memory in a form that preserves the meaning of the text but not necessarily the exact wording (Royer and Cunningham, 1981). Thus, the purpose of the SVT is to establish whether or not a reader has understood the meaning of a text and stored it in memory.

During the past decade, Royer and his associates have performed several investigations designed to collect evidence that the Sentence Verification Technique is a valid and reliable measure of reading comprehension. For example, Royer, Hastings, and Hook (1979) found that the SVT is sensitive to readability levels of text, that SVT performance declines as a function of reading difficulty of text, and that SVT performance

correlates significantly with both standardized reading comprehension test performance and intelligence test performance. Royer, Lynch, Hambleton, and Bulgareli (1984) found that the SVT is sensitive to differences in subject matter expertise, that the SVT is sensitive to Kintschian text characteristics (Kintsch & van Dijk, 1978), and that SVT is a measure of passage comprehension rather than a measure of sentence comprehension. Royer, Kulhavey, Lee, and Peterson (1986) reported that SVT can be used to measure both listening and reading comprehension. Rasool and Royer (1986) found that SVT is sensitive to teacher-defined differences in reading competence and that SVT performance is significantly related to a student's understanding of printed text. Finally, Royer (1986) reported that the results of two studies (Royer, Lynch, Hambleton, and Bulgareli, 1984; Royer and Hambleton, 1983), which were specifically directed toward getting evidence that SVT is a reliable measure of reading comprehension, found that the average coefficients of internal consistency were .85 and .90 respectively. Thus, findings from the above studies appear to confirm

that the SVT is a reliable and valid measure of reading comprehension.

Second, in a recent pilot study, Michigan Department of Education (Roeber, 1988; Wixon, Peters, Weber, & Roeber, 1987) introduced a new reading comprehension test as a part of a large scale assessment called the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP). The new test was developed by writing multiple choice and yes/no recognition questions which address four categories of reading objectives: constructing meaning, knowledge about reading, topic familiarity, and attitudes and self-perception. The use of the MEAP test as a measure of comprehension is based on the theoretical assumption that meaning is constructed through a dynamic interaction among the reader, the text, and the context of the reading situation. Approximately 10,000 students at the fourth, seventh, and tenth grade levels from a stratified volunteer sample participated in the study during the Fall of 1987. Roeber (1988) reported that the MEAP was found to be a valid measure of reading comprehension both as a total measure and as individual subtest measures. Reliability of the constructing

meaning subtest was found to be positive ranging between .80 and .90 (as measured by the Kuder-Richardson formula). A correlational analysis of performance on an earlier version of the MEAP test and performance on the present MEAP test revealed a positive correlation of .70.

While the SVT and the MEAP differ in the type of test item (sentence in the case of the SVT and question in the case of the MEAP), both attempt to assess comprehension as an interactive process in relation to a given text (either a whole story or an expository passage). Despite the fact that such assessment instruments have been developed, there appears to be no effort to compare either instrument with other instruments that purport to assess reading comprehension as an interactive process.

The SVT and the MEAP approaches are consistent with recent theory and are interactive. Both new measures are comparable because they have been developed from the same theoretical framework which states that comprehension is derived from the dynamic interaction between the context, text, and reader, producing a

construction in memory that preserves the meaning but not the precise words of a passage. Further, using the Barrett Taxonomy of Cognitive and Affective Dimensions of Reading Comprehension (Barrett, 1972), the researcher ascertained that the comprehension skills being measured by SVT and MEAP tests are comparable on two dimensions: reorganization, and evaluation. Thus, both measures are designed to assess a variety of responses from higher levels of cognitive processing unlike earlier traditional measures that focused on the recall of precise, predetermined responses from lower cognitive levels.

A Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out during the first two weeks of the 1989 Spring semester with three classes of university undergraduates enrolled in a Reading course. The purpose of the pilot study was to improve the experimental instruments by gathering data regarding content, item discrimination, item difficulty, item readability, instrument reliability, instrument validity, and optimal administration time of the two instruments following the predetermined procedures. The

participants in the pilot study had not previously read the textbook and had not received instruction regarding the selected target passages which were included in the experimental tests. As a result of the pilot study, the instruments were revised. Test directions were improved, and administration time was determined.

Materials

Selection of a Measure of General Reading Achievement

Scores from a valid test of general reading achievement were needed to determine their rank ordering and placement into achievement cells, and second, to provide data for determining the construct validity of the two experimental measures. The Nelson Denny Reading Test (NDRT), Form F (Brown, Bennett, & Hanna, 1981), a survey test for secondary, college, and adult students, was chosen because its scores correlate well with the scholastic achievement of all students (Garrett, 1949) including minority (Joyner, 1972) and remedial students (Muia & Bliesmer, 1976) and because its national standardization was conducted with over 25,000 secondary and college students from five geographic regions of three size categories and four

socio-economic categories. Only the comprehension subtest, containing 8 reading passages and 36 multiple choice questions, was used.

Reading Passages. Prior to conducting the pilot study, three representative passages were chosen from the class text, Helping Children Learn To Read (Searfoss & Readence, 1985). These passages, revised according to the specifications of Royer, Hastings, and Hook (1979) included a passage on the advantages of oral teacher presentations as compared with written textbook presentations, a passage on extension exercises to enhance vocabulary knowledge, and finally, a passage on context-strategy lessons (see Appendixes A, B, and C for complete passages). Using Grammatik II (1987), a microcomputer software program, passage comparability was determined. Based upon sentence (number of, average length, and end punctuation), word (number of), and special (passive voice and prepositions) statistics, the Flesh-Kincaid Readability Level for each passage was as follows: Passage A - Grade Level 11; Passage B - Grade Level 11; Passage C - Grade Level 10. Original Flesch Reading Ease scores were respectively 54, 41, and 56 for

each passage. Thus, the three passages were considered suitable content for the test domain.

Development of Experimental Assessment Instruments

Following the procedures recommended by Royer, Hastings, and Hook (1979) for the development of a Sentence Verification Technique (SVT) instrument and by Wixson, Peters, Weber, and Roeber (1987) for the development of a Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) instrument, the researcher prepared SVT and MEAP test items for each passage. These test items were randomized and assembled into prototypical experimental tests of prior knowledge and tests of comprehension.

Measures of Prior Knowledge. Prior knowledge is a source of test bias for two reasons. First, the extent of an individual's prior knowledge influences the basic cognitive processes which are involved in reading comprehension (Johnston, 1981). Second, prior knowledge influences the inferences which an individual makes as he comprehends text (Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert, and Goetz, 1977). However, according to Johnston (1984), this bias can be removed from tests by partialing out

the effects of prior knowledge at the individual level rather than the population level. Therefore, in the current study, measures of prior knowledge were administered for two purposes: (a) to minimize the effects of prior knowledge and experience, and (b) to serve as covariates. Two such measures of prior knowledge were developed, an experimental SVT Test of Prior Knowledge containing 12 test statements which may or may not have been generically true regarding the target passage topics (see Appendix D for the complete experimential SVT prior knowledge test), and an experimental MEAP Test of Prior Knowledge containing 12 questions regarding characteristics, examples, and relationships found in the three target passages (see Appendix E for the complete experimental MEAP prior knowledge test). In both cases, subjects were asked to respond "yes", "no", or "don't know" to each test item.

Measures of Comprehension as an Interactive Process.

Two measures of comprehension as an interactive process were developed, an experimental SVT Test of Comprehension and an experimental MEAP Test of Comprehension. In the development of the SVT test,

comprehension is assumed theoretically to be a constructive process which entails an interaction between context, the linguistic message, and the knowledge base of the listener or reader (Brown, Bransford, Ferrara, and Campione, 1983; di Sibio, 1982). It is further assumed that this interaction results in a construction that preserves the meaning, but not the precise words of a message (Kintsch & van Dijk, 1978). Therefore, the SVT test of comprehension was designed to measure whether the reader has remembered the meaning of text. The revised SVT test in the current study contained a total of 36 test statements (12 per target passage), an equal number of which are originals, paraphrases, meaning changes, and distractors. According to Royer, Abranovic, and Sinatra (1987), the SVT test must include the four types to prevent the examinee from relying on strategies that do "not involve the evaluation of meaning" (p. 417). Subjects were asked to respond "old" to those statements which were the same as or mean the same as the passage sentences (originals, paraphrases) and to respond "new" to those statements which had a different meaning than the passage sentences

(meaning changes, distractors). A multiple choice format was used to accommodate machine scoring.

In the development of the MEAP, it is assumed that if readers are to construct meaning from different texts under a variety of conditions, they must be able to apply their knowledge and skills. In addition, they "must have knowledge about purposes for reading, and about how different reader, text, and contextual factors can influence their reading" (Wixson & Peters for Michigan State Board of Education, 1987). Therefore, the MEAP test of comprehension is designed (a) to assess how well different individuals construct meaning at different levels of comprehension, not how well they execute a particular skill, and (b) to evaluate students' knowledge about how reader, text, and contextual factors influencing comprehension and the strategies used in different situations. The experimental MEAP test contained a total of 36 questions (12 per target passage), each with four multiple choice responses. To insure that the test questions focused on the most important ideas, conceptual maps were constructed to identify the important elements of

information in each passage. Information from the conceptual maps was then used as the basis for developing the test items. Students were directed to choose the best response to each item.

Evaluation of the SVT and MEAP Test Items. Using the standards set forth by the American Psychological Association (1985), the revised experimental SVT and MEAP tests were evaluated for validity and reliability. To determine face validity (whether the present instruments were developed according to the procedures and criteria proposed by the original developers) and content validity (the match between the items on the test and the curriculum that has been taught) of the instruments, prototypes were submitted to a panel of three graduate teaching assistants in the doctoral program who had previously taught the course content using the specified textbook. After reviewing test-writing specifications and sample SVT and MEAP tests, members of the panel were asked to judge each test item using a rating scale to determine if the individual items met the predetermined criteria of content, technique, readability, and clarity. As a

result of the critical review to identify needed changes, the unacceptable items were rewritten. Then all items were reassembled into sample tests by passage and test types to be field tested for item discrimination and item difficulty.

Specifically, two sets of testing packets were prepared, a prior knowledge set and a comprehension set. In the first set, one half of the packets contained materials arranged in the following way: a SVT prior knowledge test, a SVT answer sheet, a MEAP prior knowledge test, and a MEAP answer sheet. The other one half of the test packets contained a MEAP prior knowledge test, a MEAP answer sheet, a SVT prior knowledge test, and a SVT answer sheet. In the second set (the comprehension set), counterbalancing the passages to control for practice and fatigue, each packet contained a passage, a test, a test, a passage, a test, a test, a passage, a test, a test, an SVT answer sheet, and a MEAP answer sheet. In each case, tests were arranged so that subjects were denied access to the text, but questions were answered immediately after reading the text. On prearranged dates, the prototypes

were field tested in two undergraduate classrooms during regular class sessions by the researcher. After completing the tests, participants returned all contents in their original packets. Answer sheets were sorted and sent with answer keys to the university testing services for item analysis.

Results of the item analyses showed that several items on the comprehension tests needed to be rewritten to improve both difficulty factor and discrimination index. Informal comments from the participants seemed to indicate that items on the SVT test were influencing responses on the MEAP test if the SVT test was completed first. Therefore, unacceptable items were rewritten, and random selection was used to combine items on the experimental SVT comprehension test with items on the experimental MEAP comprehension test at each passage level. Final revised prototypes were field tested in a third university classroom enrolled in a reading course. Answer sheets were again sent to the university testing services for evaluation.

Construct validity (whether items on the test actually measure the construct or behavior that is

supposedly being measured) was determined in two ways. First, using the Pearson correlation formula, the standard scores from the NDRT, and the standard scores from the experimental SVT and MEAP tests, correlation coefficients were calculated. Second, using the Barrett Taxonomy of Cognitive and Affective Dimensions of Reading Comprehension (Barrett, 1972), the items on the NDRT, the experimental SVT comprehension test, and the experimental MEAP comprehension test were examined (a) to identify the mental processes required to complete the test items and (b) to determine the extent to which these mental processes overlapped on these instruments. Results of the two evaluative measures of construct validity appeared to concur with each other. Based upon the Pearson correlation coefficients, the tests of prior knowledge were found to correlate with each other (.33), but neither were related to the NDRT. Whereas, the tests of comprehension were found to be positively correlated (.65), and both were related to a lesser degree to the NDRT (.23 and .25 respectively). Based upon the dimensions of Barrett's taxonomy, 58 percent of the items on the general reading achievement test

measured literal comprehension. Whereas, 0 percent of the items on the experimental SVT and the experimental MEAP comprehension tests measured literal comprehension. Conversely, 42 percent of the items on the general reading achievement test measured reading processes above the literal comprehension level. Whereas, 100 percent of the items on the experimental SVT and the experimental MEAP comprehension tests measured reading processes above the literal level.

Method

Subjects

The subjects were 74 university students who were enrolled in a Decoding, Reading, and Language Arts course during the Spring semester. Due to attrition, the number of participants was reduced to 62. Among these were 6 males and 56 females. All participants were undergraduates in their senior year of the Professional Teacher Preparation Program enrolled either at the large main campus or a smaller satellite campus of a major public university in the Southwest. Participants were designated as high achieving (upper one third), average achieving (middle one third), and

low achieving (lower one third) readers according to rank ordering of their raw scores from the comprehension subtest of the Nelson Denny Reading Test, Form F (1981) which was administered the first class session of the semester. High achieving students had raw scores ranging from 31 to 36; average achieving students had raw scores ranging from 26 to 30; low achieving students had raw scores ranging from 16 to 26. Lacking a second achievement indicator, random selection was used to determine placement of the seven students who had a raw score of 26. Two subjects were placed in the average group, whereas, five subjects were placed in the low group. The number of participants (N = 62) resulted in unequal cell sizes (21 high, 21 average, 20 low).

Procedure

At the beginning of the semester, prior to instruction, the subjects were administered three tests: (a) a NDRT, (b) an experimental SVT prior knowledge test, and (c) an experimental Meap prior knowledge test. familiarity). Instruction then took place allowing time to complete the three chapters containing the target passages (about 9 weeks). Class instruction included a

course syllabus, a textbook (Searfoss & Readence, 1985), videotapes (Reinmuth, Searfoss, & Silvaroli, 1987), discussion, and field experience. Upon completion of instruction (nine weeks into the semester), the subjects were administered a combined form of the experimental SVT and MEAP comprehension tests (see Appendix F for a complete experimental comprehension test). All data were collected on general purpose National Computer System answer sheets (NCS Trans Optic 01-30423 -40, 1983) and were tabulated by the university testing services.

Analysis

Because randomization of subjects was impossible, data from the randomized treatments were analyzed using a two way analysis of covariance on the experimental test of comprehension standard scores. The experimental tests of prior knowledge standard scores were used as the covariates to compensate for any initial group differences (prior knowledge and experience). Type of test (SVT, MEAP) and rank of student according to general reading ability (high, average, low) were the independent variables. The comprehension test scores

were the dependent variables. The level of significance chosen for the analyses was .05.

Determining Whether a Difference Existed

To determine whether a difference existed between the results of the experimental SVT Comprehension Test and the results of the experimental MEAP Comprehension Test, a comparison of the equality of the central tendencies of the paired measures was performed on the scores from each test. Results of a *t* test comparing the SVT Comprehension Test mean with the MEAP Comprehension Test mean yielded a highly significant *t* value; t (61 *df*) = 10.36; $p<.0001$ (critical value = 2.00, $p < .05$) indicating a significant difference between the two tests. Students showed significantly higher scores on the SVT Comprehension Test (M = 23.97) when compared to MEAP Comprehension Test (M = 19.16). Having ascertained that a significant difference existed between the mean scores of the two major variables, the researcher sought to determine the extent to which individual differences in the two variables had attributed to the same determining factors (prior knowledge, general reading ability).

Determining Relationships Between Dependent Variables

To discover the nature and the degree of the relationship between the dependent variables (scores from the tests), Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated using the continuous data for all possible combinations of variables (types of tests) in the study. These correlations are presented in Table 1.

Meeting Basic Assumptions for Analysis of Covariance

Prior to using covariance analysis, a check was made to determine whether the basic assumptions of the statistical design had been met. This check revealed that because the same sample population had received both treatments, homogeneity of variance existed; that tests of common slope (homogeneity of regression) indicated parallel regression slopes; and that linear regression of Y on X was satisfied by the use of scatter diagrams and Pearson's correlation. Results from this analysis yielded a significant Pearson's $r = .65$ (2, 60), $p < .05$ when the experimental SVT comprehension scores and the experimental MEAP comprehension scores were compared. Results also yielded a significant $r =$

.33 (2, 60), $p \leq .05$ when the experimental SVT prior knowledge scores and the experimental MEAP prior knowledge scores were compared. The critical value of Pearson's r is .25 for a two-tailed test. Results from tests regarding the basic assumptions were tenable, thus permitting conventional analyses of covariance.

Adjusting for Prior Knowledge

No significant difference was observed in the comprehension scores of high, average, and low readers as measured by the experimental SVT test either before [F (2, 61) = 2.30, p = .11] or after [F (2, 61) = 1.91, p = .16] prior knowledge had been taken into account (critical value = 3.15). Whereas, differences in the comprehension scores of high, average, and low readers as measured by the experimental MEAP test were attributed to differences in ability and learning before [F (2, 61) = 4.01, p=.02] and after [F (2, 61) = 3.87, p = .03] differences in prior knowledge are taken into account (critical value =3.15).

Univariate Analysis of Variance for Ability Group Interaction. Univariate analysis of ability on the experimental SVT comprehension test scores which have

been adjusted for prior knowledge revealed no significant effect on comprehension, [F (2, 56) = .64, p = .532]. In contrast, univariate analysis of ability on the experimental MEAP comprehension test scores which have been adjusted for prior knowledge revealed a significant effect on comprehension, [F (2, 56) = .01, p = .987]. Unadjusted means for the MEAP were 20.86, whereas, adjusted means were 19.16. Therefore, ability had a positive effect upon comprehension when comprehension was measured using the experimental MEAP instrument. In contrast, ability had no effect upon comprehension when comprehension was measured using the experimental SVT instrument.

Discussion

Despite the fact that both experimental tests were developed from the same theoretical framework, differences in test scores appear to indicate that the two tests may be measuring different aspects of reading comprehension. Further, SVT comprehension scores do not appear to be sensitive to ability even before the difference in prior knowledge is taken into account. Yet, the ability group interaction revealed an unusual

pattern in that high ability students scored average, average ability students scored high, and low ability students scored low on the SVT of comprehension. Whereas, high ability students scored low, average ability students scored high, and low ability students scored average on the SVT test of prior knowledge.

In contrast, differences in the MEAP comprehension scores appear to be attributed to differences in ability before and after differences in prior knowledge are taken into account. In this case, high ability students scored high, average ability students scored average, and low ability students scored low on the MEAP test of comprehension and the MEAP test of prior knowledge.

A shortcoming of this study is the size of the sample population ($N = 62$). Because sample size has a direct influence on such factors as tests of differences, standard error, test reliability, and test validity, sample size in future studies should be increased. According to Levine (1981), the size of the sample in research utilizing t tests should be somewhere between 88-180 for matched pair tests (if the difference between population means is small).

Implications

Theoretical. While the developers of the SVT technique and the developers of the MEAP technique claim that their particular technique measures reading comprehension as an interactive process, the results of this study showed that if this is true, then the developers of these two techniques view the act of comprehending differently. One major difference appears to be what is contained in the obtained raw score of each instrument. For example, Royer and his colleagues (as reported in Royer & Cunningham, 1981) claim to have developed a test (SVT) which does not call upon the examinee to use prior knowledge to successfully complete the test. On the other hand, Wixson, Peters, Weber, and Roeber (as reported in Michigan State Board of Education, 1987) claim to have developed a test (MEAP) that takes prior knowledge into account because "the knowledge and experience that an individual brings to his reading are critical factors in comprehension" (p. 7). Results of the present study regarding the influence of prior knowledge on reading comprehension concurred in each case with the claims of the original

developers. Therefore, what is being measured appears to be different for the two techniques.

A second major difference appears to be the influence of general reasoning ability upon comprehension as reflected by the Nelson Denny. For example, Royer and Cunningham (1981) claim that reading comprehension should not be dependent upon reasoning ability. Therefore, SVT is constructed to eliminate the need for reasoning ability. Whereas, Wixson and her colleagues (1987) claim that reasoning ability is an important part of comprehension especially at higher levels of cognition. In this study, students performed in the expected manner on the experimental MEAP which uses reasoning ability (i.e., some high achievers scored high, some average achievers scored average, and some low achievers scored low). However, on the experimental SVT where reasoning ability was not a factor, the mean scores changed (i.e., average was high, high was average, low remained low). Therefore, the influence of reasoning ability upon comprehension appears to be different for the two instruments.

In accounting for difference in mean scores on the

two instruments, one may speculate that some high achievers (who rely on reasoning ability and attend less to word by word details) scored lower on the experimental SVT because (a) they could not rely on reasoning ability on the SVT, (b) they had not attended to word by word details, and (c) they were not permitted to return to the target passage to check their work. On the other hand, some average students may have scored higher on the SVT than the MEAP because (a) they were less dependent upon reasoning ability, and (b) they were more attentive to word by word details. On the other hand, low achievers scored low on both tests, thus indicating that lack of ability and inattentiveness to detail may have influenced their scores on both measures.

Practical. Despite the need for easy classroom assessment tools that can measure comprehension as an interactive process, this research suggests that the SVT and the MEAP might not be practical for informal assessment of short term learning as a result of instruction due to the time and effort needed to develop tests of this nature. Also instructors may not have

access to equipment necessary for building large item banks. Rather, the researcher suggests that these assessment techniques be considered for developing diagnostic instruments for the following five reasons. First, tests developed using these procedures can yield more precise information than either survey or achievement tests can. Second, they can measure components of some larger body of information or skill. Third, they can pinpoint an individual's specific areas of weakness as well as suggest their cause. Fourth, they can provide data about specific comprehension sub-skills. Finally, a test developed with these four characteristics in combination can provide a clearer determination of students' reading problems than either a weekly quiz or an annual achievement test.

SVT as a Diagnostic Tool. SVT has been designed to measure comprehension by determining if the reader has remembered the meaning of something read. If the reader has remembered the meaning of what he has read, then he will be able to judge (a) that original and paraphrased sentences have the same meaning and (b) that meaning changes and distractors do not have the same

meaning as the original text. Conversely, if a reader has not remembered what he has read, he will have great difficulty in classifying the test sentences. Furthermore, the inclusion of all four test sentence types eliminates reliance on surface structure clues as guides to responding. This forces the examinee to evaluate the meaning of the test sentences and passage. The diagnostic value of the SVT technique resides in the ability of the test to differentiate between readers who are decoders (or "bottom up" type readers) and who are meaning seekers (or "top down" type readers). Decoders may perform well on originals and distractors, but they may have difficulty with paraphrases and meaning changes. For example, they may classify paraphrases as new sentences because the wording is different, or they may mark meaning changes incorrectly because they are similar in wording to a passage sentence. In other words, decoders may attend to specific words but may not attend to textual meaning.

In contrast, meaning seekers may be so attentive to textual meaning that they may be inattentive to specific words. Therefore, meaning seekers may do well

classifying originals, paraphrases, and meaning changes, but they may make errors on distractors because these are consistent with the passage as a whole. By using the SVT as a diagnostic tool, a teacher or a reading specialist can determine whether readers are decoders or whether they are meaning seekers and then plan instruction according to needs.

MEAP as a Diagnostic Tool. As a large scale assessment technique, the MEAP was designed to evaluate students' ability to apply their knowledge, skills, and strategies to reading situations encountered in the classroom. It is the researcher's opinion that the MEAP technique could also be used to develop an informal reading and attitude inventory or a diagnostic test. For example, a diagnostic test could be developed at any grade level by selecting representative whole stories, expository chapters (or units), poetry, or other informative material from the assigned instructional material, and then, by constructing test items using the MEAP guidelines. Appropriate cutoff scores could be determined (a) at the total test level, (b) at the subtest level (type of representative reading material),

(c) at the category of objectives level (constructing meaning, knowledge about reading, attitudes and perceptions, topic familiarity), and (d) at the item level within each category of objectives for each type of reading material.

An overview of the types of items within each category of objectives will be presented to demonstrate the value of the MEAP as a diagnostic tool. First, the kinds of items that can be developed for the constructing meaning category of objectives for narrative material are items about: theme in the abstract, main idea of the theme, characters, setting, problem, resolution, and events. In contrast, constructing meaning items for informative or expository text would include the following specific types of questions: central purpose, major ideas, supporting ideas, adjunct aids, and key vocabulary embedded in text. In addition, a measure could be taken of the amount of text that must be processed in each instance in order to answer the question (intersentence level, text level, beyond text level). Items in the constructing meaning category of objectives are designed

to evaluate students' ability to generate meaning at different levels of comprehension for both narrative and expository text.

A similar procedure would be used to develop test items for the knowledge category of objectives. The specific kinds of test items would include: knowledge about reader factors, knowledge about text factors (type, location, structure), knowledge about text features (adjunct aids, literary devices, linguistic devices), and knowledge about strategy use. Items such as these are designed to evaluate students' knowledge about how reader, text, and contextual factors influence their comprehension, and about strategy usage in different reading situations.

In order to determine if poor performance is due to lack of prior knowledge, inadequate skill development, or a combination of the two, items could be developed for the third category of objectives, namely, topic familiarity. Three types of items would comprise this subtest. After three concepts for each passage are selected, the following three types of questions would be developed for each concept: characteristics or

attributes of each concept, examples of each concept, and relations among concepts. Items such as these are designed to evaluate students' knowledge of the superordinate concepts that are important to the understanding of each passage.

Finally, unlike present diagnostic tests, the proposed instrument would have an attitude subtest that would be administered as a part of the diagnostic test rather than a separate reading attitude inventory. Items for the attitude and perceptions category of objectives ask students to indicate their interest in the material, their ability to understand each of the selections, and the amount of effort they made in reading the selection and answering the questions for each selection. Because the questions would be asked in relation to each of the selections on the test, they could be interpreted in ways that are not possible in generic attitude surveys or inventories. For example, effort items would indicate (in a rough way) how much effort a student is willing to spend in reading and understanding the various kinds of reading material.

In summary, the researcher recommends that the two

assessment techniques being considered in this research study be used as diagnostic tools in the following ways: (a) the SVT as a holistic measure to determine whether the reader is a decoder or a meaning seeker, and (b) the MEAP as a sophisticated diagnostic test or as a group administered informal reading and attitude inventory.

Future Research. The present study needs to be replicated as originally designed, but with a larger sample size and greater care given to item analysis. Such a replication would provide stronger evidence regarding the differences between the two assessment techniques. Then further research needs to be done to determine whether one of the assessment techniques is a more effective measure of comprehension than the other technique. Such a study might entail using a pretest-posttest design with a random sample (if available) of undergraduate and graduate students and using the Nelson Denny Reading Test to partial out general reading ability so that measures of actual learning can be derived. Thus, some indication regarding the effectiveness of the two measures can be realized.

Table 1

Correlations Among Tests of General Reading Ability, Prior Knowledge, and Comprehension for Total Sample

	SVT TPK	MEAP TPK	SVT CT	MEAP CT
ND	-.0493 p=.352	-.2392 p=.031*	.2254 p=.039*	.2459 p=.027*
SVT TPK		.3334 p=.004*	.1498 p=.123	.0175 p=.446
MEAP TPK			-.0426 p=.371	-.0568 p=.331
SVT CT				.6513 p=.000*

Note. N = 62. ND is Nelson Denny Reading Test, Form F. SVT TPK is Sentence Verification Technique Test of Prior Knowledge. MEAP TPK is Michigan Educational Assessment Program Test of Prior Knowledge. SVT CT is Sentence Verification Technique Comprehension Test. MEAP CT is Michigan Educational Assessment Program Comprehension Test.

* $p < .05$

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Appendix A

Experimental Target Passage A

DIRECTIONS: Read each passage carefully until it is understood. Then answer the passage questions. DO NOT LOOK BACK AT THE PASSAGE AFTER YOU HAVE READ IT.

A. Advantages of Oral Presentations

Schallert and Kleinman studied the advantages of oral presentations by teachers as compared with written presentations found in textbooks. The four advantages they present reflect some of the basic differences that exist between print and speech. Summarized briefly, the four advantages are as follows. First, to interact with students, teachers make use of their knowledge of what students already know. When puzzled looks indicate confusion, they use simpler words to explain a difficult concept. Schallert and Kleiman quote Socrates in his dialogue PHAEDRUS as saying "Written words seem to talk to you as though they were intelligent, but if you ask them anything about what they say ... they go on telling you the same thing forever."

Second, teachers can remind students of knowledge they already have about a topic and can relate new knowledge to it. Prior knowledge, with teacher guidance, serves as a framework or place to put new knowledge. Third, teachers can focus the attention of students by directing it to specific parts of a story or message that are important and by motivating them to become interested in a story or message. Finally, to check whether students are comprehending, teachers can ask questions at various key points during a story or message, rather than waiting until the end.

As you read and reread these advantages, think about them, and consider how much more effective learning would be if teachers were aware of them. All four provide opportunities for teachers to provide help for children as they read textbooks as a part of learning in school.

Note. From Helping Children Learn To Read (pp. 16-17, 222, 160) by L. W. Searfoss and J. E. Readence, 1985, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall. Copyright 1985 by Prentice Hall, Inc. Adapted by permission.

Appendix B

Experimental Target Passage B

B. Extension Activities

Extension activities are paper-and-pencil exercises designed to expand children's knowledge of vocabulary words. Their intent is to reinforce children's concepts related to words that they have been previously told are important in their reading and learning. Thus, extension exercises are constructed by the teacher as a final step in vocabulary teaching. Important words are introduced to children before they read. They use these words in their reading and in any follow-up discussion. Finally, they practice with these new words, even further, with an extension activity.

Recall and memorization of definitions of words are involved in using extension activities; however, children must also be allowed to explore the relationships among words in a variety of ways. Therefore, extension activities should also give children the opportunity to think about the meanings of the vocabulary words they are learning. An extension activity that reinforces the definition of a word without requiring children to also consider the meanings of other words may be called a definition activity. A matching exercise or a crossword puzzle would be examples of reinforcing word definitions. An activity that requires children to consider the meaning of a word in relation to definitions or meanings of other words may be called a meaning activity. Categorization exercises and analogies are examples of reinforcing word meanings.

Appendix C

Experimental Target Passage C

C. Context-Strategy Lessons

The aim of context-strategy lessons is to systematically extend children's ability to use context clues and to develop independence in decoding unknown words. They are probably best introduced at grades 3 and above after simple dictionary skills have been introduced and after the talk-thru method has been used with children, because context-strategy lessons are more complicated and require children to make some decisions.

Context-strategy lessons help children discover what direct help is provided by context clues. If no direct help is available, children are trained to search for indirect help through structural analysis or the dictionary. Emphasis is placed not only on strategies (looking for direct and indirect help), but also on skills (context clues, structural analysis, and dictionary skills).

When presenting a context-strategy lesson, the teacher should "walk" children through the strategies and skills needed to unlock the meaning of a new word in context. An example of such a situation might be the use of the target word "hydrophobia" in the sentence "John's mother has hydrophobia." In analyzing this with children, the teacher should point out that no direct help is provided through the context, but that utilizing the strategy of indirect help may be profitable. Focusing on the structure of the word, in this case, would provide an aid to the unknown word. "Phobia" means fear of something , but what? Thinking about "hydro" and other words, we might think of "hydroplane" or "hydroelectric", both of which are related to water; therefore, putting "hydro--water" with "phobia--fear", we get "fear of water". Here, structure was our best help in identifying the unknown vocabulary word. Thus, each lesson would stress both strategies and skills, with the goal being to have children to analyze which strategy to use and then decide what skills within the strategy to apply.

Appendix D

Experimental SVT Test of Prior Knowledge

SVT PRETEST OF PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

DIRECTIONS: Read each statement and mark a if it is TRUE, b if it is FALSE, or c if you DO NOT KNOW the answer.

(a) true 1. In checking whether students are comprehending, the
(b) false teacher should hold questions until the end, rather than interrupt student thinking during a story or passage.

(a) true 2. Prior knowledge, with teacher guidance, serves as a
(b) false schemata or location for new knowledge.

(a) true 3. The benefits of lectures by instructors are comparable to
(b) false the benefits of expository material found in textbooks.

(a) true 4. Speech and print are basically the same as communication
(b) false tools.

(a) true 5. Extension activities are exercises designed to focus on
(b) false gaining meaning from context.

(a) true 6. Reinforcing the definition of a word without requiring
(b) false students to consider the meanings of other words is called a definition activity.

(a) true 7. Matching exercises and crossword puzzles are examples of
(b) false reinforcing word meanings.

(a) true 8. Recall and memorization play a secondary role in extension
(b) false activities.

(a) true 9. Context-strategy lessons help children discover what
(b) false direct help is provided by context clues.

(a) true 10. The aim of context-strategy lessons is to extend chil-
(b) false dren's ability to use context clues.

(a) true 11. Emphasis should be placed on strategies as well as skills
(b) false when teaching comprehension.

(a) true 12. Focusing on the structure of a word in a sentence can
(b) false provide aid in decoding an unknown word.

Appendix E

Experimental MEAP Test of Prior Knowledge

MEAP TOPIC FAMILIARITY TEST
(Pretest of Prior Knowledge)

DIRECTIONS: Choose the BEST answer.

Do the following characteristics help describe context-strategy lessons?

1. emphasizing phonic decoding of unknown words which have no context clues?

   a. Yes b. No c. Do not know

2. reinforcing concepts related to the decoding of important vocabulary words?

   a. Yes b. No c. Do not know

Do the following characteristics help describe extension activities?

3. explaining relationships among words in a variety of ways.

   a. Yes b. No c. Do not know

4. assisting in the recall and memorization of important words.

   a. Yes b. No c. Do not know

Do the following characteristics describe the advantages of oral presentation as a communication tool in the classroom?

5. discussing single or multiple topics over time.

   a. Yes b. No c. Do not know

6. interacting with students based on their needs.

   a. Yes b. No c. Do not know

PLEASE CONTINUE ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

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Is the following an example of reinforcing word meanings?

7. arranging words in the right order.

EXAMPLE: dog, collie, animal, Lassie
collie, dog, Lassie, animal
animal, dog, collie, Lassie
animal, collie, dog, Lassie

a. Yes b. No c. Do not know

Is the following an example of identifying relationships?

8. matching the words in Column A with definitions in Column B?

a. Yes b. No c. Do not know

Is the following an example of a context-strategy lesson?

9. using structure to decode the word "subaqueous" in the following sentence.

"This is a subaqueous plant."

a. Yes b. No c. Do not know

DIRECTIONS: Mark YES if the statement is correct. Mark NO if the statement is NOT correct.

10. Context-strategy lessons lead to expansion of children's knowledge of vocabulary words.

a. Yes b. No c. Do not know

11. Direct help in decoding unknown words is made available by the author, whereas indirect help in decoding unknown words is provided by the teacher.

a. Yes b. No c. Do not know

12. Extension activities lead to independence in decoding unknown words.

a. Yes b. No c. Do not know

Appendix F

Experimental Combine SVT and MEAP Comprehension Test

Revised Comprehension Test Directions

This test contains 3 twelve-sentence passages chosen from the chapters of your class text which you have already read, discussed, and applied. After you have thoroughly read each passage, you will be asked to respond to a twenty-four item subtest without referring back to the passage. Each passage subtest will contain an equal number of multiple choice items and an equal number of sentence verification items. Specific directions and examples as to how you should respond to each of these kinds of items are as follows:

Multiple Choice Items: Read the question or item stem and all of the responses. Then choose the BEST response, and mark the letter of that response on your answer sheet.

Example: According to Jeanne Chall in THE GREAT DEBATE, the BEST way to teach reading is by using

a. a synthetic or analytical phonics approach.
b. a whole language approach.
c. an integrated approach.
d. an approach that the teacher believes in.
(The best correct response is d.)

Sentence Verification Items: Read each test sentence. Mark either a for OLD or b for NEW on your answer sheet.

Remember an OLD sentence is one which is the same as or means the same as a passage sentence, i.e., an exact replica or a paraphrase. A NEW sentence is one which has a different meaning than a passage sentence, i.e., a contradiction or a distractor.

Example: Jane likes cats better than she likes dogs.

1. Jane likes cats better than she likes dogs.
   a. OLD
   b. NEW

2. Jane loves cats more than she loves dogs.
   a. OLD
   b. NEW

3. Jane does not like cats better than she likes dogs.
   a. OLD
   b. NEW

4. Jane thinks cats are better pets than dogs.
   a. OLD
   b. NEW
   (The correct responses are a, a, b, and b.)

Questions for Passage A: Oral and Written Presentation

1. The researchers helped you to understand the basic differences between print and speech by

   a. contrasting the differences.
   b. summarizing the advantages of one of them.
   c. listing the advantages and disadvantages of each.
   d. explaining the relationship between them.

2. When the puzzled looks of students indicate confusion, teachers can use simpler words to explain a difficult concept.

   a. old
   b. new

3. After reading, rereading, and thinking about the advan tages of oral presentation, a teacher might conclude that written presentations are not as effective as oral ones.

   a. old
   b. new

4. Schallert and Kleiman quote Socrates in his dialogue Phaedrus as saying "Written discourse seems to converse with you as though it is intelligent, but if you question it regarding anything that it says,... it goes on stating the same thing forever."

   a. old
   b. new

5. The quote from Socrates' PHAEDRUS is used to show that

   a. written text cannot respond to individual students' needs.
   b. authors work hard to communicate in a friendly manner.
   c. written text appears to be intelligent because it is grammatically precise and complete.
   d. written words can be referred to an unlimited number of times.

6. In oral presentations, students can relate to new knowledge because the teacher

   a. reminds them of their prior knowledge regarding the topic.
   b. defines difficult words and concepts found in the text.
   c. builds a framework for new knowledge.
   d. clarifies the confusion by reteaching the new concept.

7. To interact effectively with students, teachers should make use of what they already know about their students.

   a. old
   b. new

8. The major instructional conclusion that can be drawn from the Schallert and Kleiman study is that

   a. teachers are better presenters than authors.
   b. authors may confuse some readers.
   c. teachers need to prepare their lesson presentations well.
   d. students need guidance as they read.

9. The four superior qualities of oral presentation are briefly outlined in this passage.

   a. old
   b. new

10. Some of a student's inability to understand a new concept comes about because the student is

    a. not motivated by the reading topic.
    b. not attending to the appropriate part of the text.
    c. making the concept more difficult than it really is.
    d. not monitoring his own learning.

11. Teachers can remind students of what they know about a topic and can relate old knowledge to it.

    a. old
    b. new

12. The four advantages the authors present reflect some of the basic differences that exist between print and speech.

    a. old
    b. new

13. Under what conditions would the findings of this research be BEST implemented in the classroom?

    a. Using written text during reading instruction.
    b. Using written text during language arts instruction.
    c. Using written text during any instruction.
    d. Using oral presentation during any instruction.

14. The BEST way to clear up students' confusion regarding a written story or message is to

    a. respond positively to the students' puzzled looks.
    b. answer the students' probing questions.
    c. use simpler words to explain the difficult concept.
    d. guide the students as they carefully reread the passage.

15. To check whether students are comprehending correctly, teachers can ask questions before and after the story or message, rather than during the lesson.

    a. old
    b. new

16. It can be inferred from the passage that

    a. both oral and written presentations have their own shortcomings.
    b. learning from both oral and written presentations may be further enhanced by oral interpretation.
    c. learning from oral presentations is superior to learning from text.
    d. learning from text can be enhanced by oral presentation.

17. Studying the advantages of oral presentation by teachers as compared with written presentation found in textbooks, Schallert and Kleiman found written presentation to be unsatisfactory.

    a. old
    b. new

18. You would MOST likely find a passage like this in a reading education textbook under a general topic called

    a. schema theory.
    b. comprehension development.
    c. language concepts.
    d. learning assessment.

19. Prior knowledge, without teacher guidance, serves as a framework or place to store old knowledge.

    a. old
    b. new

20. The central purpose of this passage is to

    a. explain why teachers' lectures are more effective than authors' text.
    b. compare the advantages and disadvantages of two tools of communication.
    c. present some basic differences that exist between speech and print.
    d. teach instructors how to respond to confusion during reading instruction.

21. Instructors can direct students' interest by pointing out significant segments of a story or message and by encouraging students to examine the story or message more closely.

    a. old
    b. new

22. What did the researchers discover when they examined teacher oral presentation and textbook written presentation?

    a. That oral presentation seems to be more advantageous than written presentation.
    b. That all text learning needs to be orally reinforced.
    c. That written words seem to talk to you as if they were intelligent.
    d. That greater learning takes place from oral presentations.

23. Which of the following basic language principles would help you MOST in understanding the significance of this passage?

    a. The function of language is to communicate.
    b. Print is not simply speech written down.
    c. The whole of language is not the sum of its parts.
    d. Classroom language differs from outside language.

24. All four advantages provide opportunities for teachers to provide help for children as they read textbooks as a part of learning in school.

    a. old
    b. new

Questions for Passage B: Extension Activities

25. The central purpose of this selection is to describe how

    a. dependence upon decoding can be enhanced.
    b. vocabulary knowledge can be extended.
    c. important memorization is in vocabulary learning.
    d. an expanded vocabulary promotes comprehension.

26. An activity such as the cloze procedure may be used to reinforce word learning.

    a. old (same as or means the same)
    b. new (different from passage)

27. Which of the following statements is supported by the information in this selection?

    a. Grade-level word lists are a prime source for extension activity words.
    b. Vocabulary teaching should focus on subject specific words and allow most word learning to occur incidentally as students read.
    c. Using words in a variety of ways showing relationships among them promotes growth of word knowledge.
    d. Rote memorization is not involved in the results of extension activities.

28. Categorization exercises and analogies are examples of reinforcing word definitions.

    a. old
    b. new

29. Extension activities should provide opportunities for students to consider the concepts underlying the vocabulary words they are studying.

    a. old
    b. new

30. Important words should be introduced to children while they read a story or passage.

    a. old
    b. new

31. It can be concluded from the passage that extension activities do NOT promote

    a. more efficient use of context clues.
    b. greater recall of words.
    c. increased reasoning ability.
    d. better knowledge of relationships between words.

32. A final step for students in vocabulary learning is completing extension activities which have been constructed by teachers.

    a. old
    b. new

33. What happens when a child engages in a meaning activity?

    a. The meanings of words are considered independently of other words.
    b. The meanings of words are considered in relation to the meanings of other words.
    c. The student becomes acquainted with several other meanings for each new word.
    d. The student learns to select the dictionary definition which best fits the context.

34. Extension activities are worksheets created to increase pupils' learning of vocabulary words.

    a. old
    b. new

35. The last paragraph of this passage describes extension activities by

    a. describing different results.
    b. contrasting different activities.
    c. using analogies and matching exercises.
    d. stating the merits of before, during, and after practice.

36. After reading this passage, how may you BEST apply this strategy in the elementary classroom?

    a. As a beginning of the lesson motivator.
    b. As a during the unit vocabulary check.
    c. As an end of the lesson reinforcement.
    d. As a review for a test.

37. An extension activity that strengthens the definition of a term without asking students to also take into account the definitions of other words may be called a definition activity.

    a. old
    b. new

38. Which of the following statements would help you MOST in understanding the significance of this selection?

    a. The number of word meanings a reader knows is a good predictor of his comprehension ability.
    b. Categorization of words helps children focus on how words are related to one another.
    c. As with all human experience, context is very important in vocabulary development.
    d. Exercises designed to reinforce word meanings are needed for permanent vocabulary growth.

39. An activity that requires children to consider the meaning of a word in relation to definitions or meanings of other words may be called a definition activity.

    a. old
    b. new

40. Children's concepts of important words are expanded as they practice them in an extension activity.

    a. old
    b. new

41. How will a child's inability to use a dictionary affect his/her success in a meaning activity?

    a. It will have little effect due to dependence upon surrounding context clues.
    b. It will have no effect due to gaining meaning through guessing and elimination of incorrect responses.
    c. It will have little to moderate effect due to teacher introduction of the words.
    d. It will have slight effect due to dependence upon knowledge of word relationships.

42. The intent of extension activities is to reinforce children's concepts related to words that they have been previously told are important in their reading and learning.

    a. old
    b. new

43. What happens when a student engages in a definition activity?

    a. The student becomes acquainted with several other meanings for each new word.
    b. The student learns to select the dictionary definition which best fits the context.
    c. The meanings of words are considered in relation to the meanings of other words.
    d. The meanings of words are considered independently of other words.

44. A student's search for meaning through a definition activity can be described as a

    a. dictionary exercise primarily.
    b. dictionary and context exercise.
    c. dictionary and reasoning exercise.
    d. context exercise.

45. Using the Directed Reading Activity (DRA) format as found in the basal system and in your class syllabus, indicate the location of an extension activity in the lesson.

    a. Before reading the material.
    b. Between the introduction and the reading.
    c. During the reading of the material.
    d. After reading the material.

46. Recall and memorization of definitions of words are involved in using extension activities; however, children must be allowed to explore the relationships among words in a variety of ways.

    a. old
    b. new

47. A matching exercise or a crossword puzzle is an example of reinforcing word definitions.

    a. old
    b. new

48. The authors of this passage help you to understand vocabulary extension by pointing out the

a. importance of dictionary use.
b. necessity of teaching relational skills.
c. need to strengthen children's concepts related to words.
d. need to show children how to complete crossword puzzles.

Questions for Passage C: Context-Strategy Lessons

49. Because context-strategy lessons are more complicated and require children to make decisions, they are probably best introduced at grade 4 before dictionary skills have been introduced.

    a. old (same as or means the same)
    b. new (different from passage)

50. Emphasis is placed not only on strategies (looking for direct and indirect help), but also on skills (context clues, structural analysis, and dictionary skills).

    a. old
    b. new

51. In analyzing the sentence, "The railway system is subterranean," with children, the teacher should point out that using the

    a. skill of context clues may be profitable.
    b. strategy of indirect help may not be profitable.
    c. strategy of indirect help may be profitable.
    d. strategy of direct help may be profitable.

52. According to the passage, what should happen when a student discovers that context clues may not give direct help in decoding an unfamiliar word?

    a. He may search for indirect help through a dictionary or structural analysis.
    b. He may search for a definition embedded in the surrounding text.
    c. He may look for a synonym, that is, a repetition of the idea using another word.
    d. He may look for an implied comparison or contrast with a known word.

53. When introducing a context-strategy lesson, the teacher should lead students through procedures and skills needed to decipher the meaning of a new word in context.

    a. old
    b. new

54. If direct help is available, children are trained to search for indirect help through structural analysis or in the dictionary.

    a. old
    b. new

55. Direct instruction of context-strategy lessons is necessary for all of the following reasons EXCEPT

    a. context-strategy lessons are complicated and require some decision making.
    b. context-strategy lessons are designed to correct phonic deficiencies.
    c. students need an opportunity to practice under teacher supervision.
    d. students need feedback regarding the appropriateness of their applications.

56. In this passage, the author uses the word "hydrophobia" to

    a. explain the advantages of context clues.
    b. describe the influence of context.
    c. contrast strategies and skills.
    d. clarify the strategy of indirect help.

57. Which of the following would help you MOST in understanding this passage?

    a. Knowing that one must sometimes look for a repetition of the idea using another word.
    b. Knowing that context can be relied upon to give clues to meaning found in print.
    c. Knowing that the dictionary may be needed to find the meaning of the word to fit the context.
    d. Knowing that phonic and structural-analysis instruction should proceed analytically.

58. An example of a syntactic relationship might be the use of the target word "hydrophobia" in the sentence, "John's mother has hydrophobia."

    a. old
    b. new

59. Context-strategy lessons assist students to search out what immediate assistance is available through context clues.

    a. old
    b. new

60. You would MOST LIKELY find this passage in a reading education textbook under the specific topic

    a. reading strategies.
    b. decoding strategies.
    c. contextual strategies.
    d. comprehension strategies.

61. The central purpose of this passage is to describe how children can be taught to

    a. decode unfamiliar words by using the dictionary.
    b. develop independence in word decoding by using context.
    c. analyze which strategy to use and decide what skills to apply to decode unknown words.
    d. use syntactic clues and structural analysis skills to decode unknown words.

62. The role of the teacher in unlocking the meaning of unknown words located in context lacking clues is one of

    a. lecturer.
    b. facilitator.
    c. analyst.
    d. interpreter.

63. The purpose of these lessons is to systematically increase students' skill for using context clues and to promote independence in decoding unknown words.

    a. old
    b. new

64. In analyzing context with students, the teacher should point out the syntactic and semantic relationships between words.

    a. old
    b. new

65. Focusing on the structure of the word, in the case of "hydrophobia," would provide an aid to the unknown word.

a. old
b. new

66. What can be inferred about decoding instruction regarding the unknown word "nourishaent" in the following two sentences?

"It receives nourishaent."
"It receives nourishaent from the milk of its aother."

a. The strategies and skills used will differ.
b. The strategies and skills used will be the same.
c. The strategies will be the same, but the skills will differ.
d. The skills will be the same, but the strategies will differ.

67. The authors of this passage help you to understand decoding by

a. explaining what to do when direct help is available.
b. comparing direct and indirect help.
c. analyzing how several words should be taught.
d. describing a strategy and its accompanying skills.

68. Each lesson would stress both strategies and skills, with the goal being to have children analyze which strategy to use and then decide which skills to apply.

a. old
b. new

69. Context-strategy lessons can easily be adapted for use with content area vocabulary.

a. old
b. new

70. The major reason for students' ability to decode unknown words is their knowledge of

a. the English language and how it works.
b. what strategy to use and what skill to apply.
c. how to look for appropriate context clues.
d. phonics and how to apply phonic knowledge.

71. The MOST effective way to teach the word "subterranean" in the sentence, "The railway system is subterranean," would be to focus on

    a. context clues.
    b. structural analysis.
    c. dictionary skills.
    d. syntactical analysis.

72. When thinking about "hydro" with other words, the teacher might think of other prefixes which are related to water.

    a. old
    b. new